



U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia 2015 Saudi Young Leaders Exchange Program (SYLEP)

The **Saudi Young Leaders Exchange Program (SYLEP)** is a 3-week program, from July 28 – Aug 21, 2015, in the United States for 34 Saudi undergraduate students. SYLEP seeks to build leadership skills, civic responsibility, appreciation for cultural diversity, and community engagement among Saudi university students. Participants will be undergraduate students in their first to third year with demonstrated leadership abilities in their schools and communities.

The goals of this program are to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of Saudi Arabia, prepare young leaders to become responsible citizens and contributing members of their communities, and develop leadership skills among Saudi youth. Participants in SYLEP will witness some of the diverse challenges facing communities in the United States. They will also observe how individuals, non-governmental organizations, and government entities address these needs through public, private and joint initiatives. They will view traditional methods of providing service, while also learning about innovative approaches that make use of technology and social media. The program will emphasize initiatives started and run by young people, that meet the needs of youth, and/or efforts that utilize young volunteers.

Over the course of the program, participants will engage in a stimulating series of trainings and experiences while interacting with dozens of American volunteers, program clients, host families, and community leaders. Participants will gain skills in leadership, program design, critical thinking, and community engagement while deepening their respect and appreciation for diversity. The Saudi participants will divide into three subgroups and visit three cities in the mid-Atlantic region of the eastern United States. They will live on a college campus, and spend an extended weekend living with host families to gain more insights into American daily life. Participants will visit various organizations, learning about a wide range of project models and youth leadership opportunities, and participate in community service. They will also participate in a Youth Leadership Summit in Washington, DC.

Participant Eligibility

SYLEP is open to Saudi full-time university students between the ages of 20 and 24. Students from all over Saudi Arabia are encouraged to apply but SYLEP prefers participants from outside Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam/Al-Khobar when possible. Those who have traveled to the U.S. or studied abroad are ineligible. Applicants should demonstrate sufficient English-language skills to participate in U.S. university-level classes. Applicants should have demonstrated leadership abilities in their schools and communities and have a desire to participate in community service activities. Applicants must hold Saudi citizenship and cannot hold U.S. citizenship or be a U.S. Legal Permanent Resident. SYLEP is a merit-based competition. Students must return to Saudi Arabia after completion of the program. **We will only accept complete applications submitted by students directly. The application deadline is February 3, 2015,** and finalist interviews will be the week of February 8, 2015.

How to Apply

Submit your completed SYLEP application to sylep@state.gov v. If you have any questions or would like to request an application, email sylep@state.gov